EFFECT OF PREWARMING ON INADVERTENT HYPOTHERMIA AND THERMAL COMFORT

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PROJECT AIMS

Background

• The Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses’ states inadvertent perioperative hypothermia (IPH) occurs when core body temperature reaches < 35°C or 95.6°F.

• Incidence of IPH in elective surgery is reported to be 26% to 90%. Yet, it is a preventable anesthesia- and surgery-related complication affecting patients’ outcome.

• IPH is associated with an increased risk of surgical site infections (SSIs), bleeding, postoperative shivering and cardiovascular complications. All patients, regardless of age/gender, are at risk for developing IPH when general anesthesia or regional anesthesia is involved.

Methodology

• A prospective, non-experimental design was used to test the hypothesis that orthopedic/colorectal adult surgical patients who are pre-warmed using a FAW gown will maintain normothermia, and demonstrate a reduction in post-operative complications.

• The Thermal Comfort Inventory scale (TCI) was used to test patient thermal comfort satisfaction, and to examine for a reduction in anxiety, vs a baseline cohort.

• Using a pre- and post test design, perioperative nursing staff was surveyed regarding their knowledge of perioperative patient warming and the impact on patient outcomes.

Results

• N=496 surgical patients were included in the trial. Post-implementation of FAW, there was an overall improvement in post-operative complications.

• N=23 patients required blood transfusions, which is an overall decrease of 23% from pre-implementation.

• The SSI data showed a decrease in spinal fusion, and joint replacement from pre-implementation, and the anastomosis procedures remained below the SIR at zero infections.

• Continued monitoring of adherence to new prewarming interventions for maintaining normothermia.

Conclusions

We hypothesized, based on a strong literature-base, that adding forced air warming preoperatively to our on-going warming protocol would facilitate the reduction in post-op complications.

Data Showed:

• Reduction in blood usage;

• Reduction in SSIs in joint replacements and spinal fusion;

• Correlation between increased warmth and decreased patient anxiety levels;

• Staff had increased knowledge of IPH, showing implementation for maintaining normothermia.

Primary Aim

Test the effectiveness of perioperative pre-warming in the orthopedic/ colorectal surgical population, using a forced air warming (FAW) gown for 30-minutes pre-operatively, to reduce inadvertent intra and post-op hypothermia and related complications.

Secondary Aim

1. Increase patient thermal comfort and reduce anxiety through utilization of FAW gown across the perioperative experience.

2. Improve perioperative nurse’s knowledge regarding the science and rationale for perioperative patient warming and the related impact on patient clinical outcomes and thermal comfort and anxiety.

Clinical Implications

• Implementation of AORN current EGIDs of Perioperative Patient Warming interventions.

• Rigorous multidisciplinary team approach to address the multi-factorial cause(s) contributing to SSIs.

• Continued monitoring of adherence to new prewarming best practices is needed.

• Continued periop staff education is needed on risks and outcomes in hypothermia.

• Create system-wide policy for pre-op warming.

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REFERENCES


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